

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for continually joining paper webs, comprising means able to compress the said webs ~~(5,6)~~ onto an impression cylinder or roller ~~(4)~~ while the webs advance toward an outlet section of the apparatus, characterized in that the said compressive means include a roller or cylinder ~~(2)~~ which exhibits a hard outer surface ~~(20)~~ supported by an underlying elastic surface ~~(23)~~.

2. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the said elastic surface ~~(23)~~ is in turn supported by a rigid surface ~~(21)~~.

3. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the said outer surface ~~(20)~~ of said compression roller ~~(2)~~ is made up of a helicoidal body having preset pitch and direction and being applied on said elastic surface ~~(23)~~.

4. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the said outer surface ~~(20)~~ sheathes completely the said elastic surface ~~(23)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the outer surface ~~(20)~~ of said compression roller ~~(2)~~ is made of steel.

6. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the elastic surface ~~(23)~~ of said compression roller ~~(2)~~ is made of rubber.

7. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the said impression cylinder ~~(4)~~ is provided with surface reliefs and/or depressions.

8. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the said impression cylinder ~~(4)~~ is an embossing cylinder.

9. (Currently Amended) Method for carrying out the union of two paper webs ~~(5, 6)~~ by a mutual compression of the concerned webs, characterized in that it includes compressing the said webs between a pressure roller or cylinder ~~(2)~~, provided with a hard outer surface and an underlying elastic surface ~~(23)~~, and an impression roller or cylinder ~~(4)~~ provided with surface reliefs and/or depressions.

10. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 9 characterized in that the said impression cylinder is an embossing cylinder ~~(4)~~.